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## Mahā Saḷāyatana Sutta

The Great Sixfold Sense-based Discourse | M 149

Theme: Comprehending the senses brings awakening

Translated & annotated by Piya Tan ©2013

### 1 Theory and practice of the Sutta

**1.1 STRUCTURE.** The **Mahā Saḷāyatana Sutta**, the Great Sixfold Sense-based Discourse, gives a short but complete instruction on how to cultivate insight in regard to the 6 sense-bases and their related states, which the word *saḷāyatana* refers to [2.1.1]. This is, in fact, a reflection on mental proliferation and its *ending*, as elaborated in **the Madhu,piṇḍika Sutta** (M 18) [1.2.1.1+1.2.2.1].

The Sutta is here translated in full, with all *peyyālā* laid out in full—probably so for the first time in English. The main reason for this full presentation is because the Sutta is the Buddha’s instruction in insight, which we even today should read or record and listen to as a Dharma reflection as a preamble to meditation or as a personal practice. Indeed, this is the way that the suttas are originally intended to be heard and used in our personal practice.<sup>1</sup>

**1.2 TWO UNEQUAL PARTS.** The Sutta is divided into two unequal parts:

I. “When the senses are not properly understood,” that is, the negative cycle. [§§3-8]

II. “When the senses are properly understood,” the positive cycle. [§§9-27]

**1.2.1 Part I** (“when the senses are *not* properly understood”)

1.2.1.1 Part I is **the negative cycle** by way of introduction. Part II—the bulk of the Sutta—is the positive teaching, on which we should focus for personal reflection and practice. **The Madhu,piṇḍika Sutta** (M 18) first presents this negative cycle as an *unconscious* process (M 18,16) and then as a *conscious* process (that is, discerning mental proliferation) (M 18,17).<sup>2</sup>

Each section of Part I (on each of the sense-bases) deals with the following functions: the 6 senses, their objects, consciousnesses, contacts, and the 3 types of feeling that lead to the arising of lust, resulting in the continuation of the 5 aggregates, to future rebirth, and to bodily and mental afflictions. [2.1.2]

1.2.1.2 Part I can be **summarized** thus: When we do not know or see the sense-faculties and their functions as what they really are [§3.1 etc], we would be aroused by measuring our sense-experiences [§§3.2-3.3 etc], so that we pile up the 5 aggregates [§3.4 etc], increasing craving [§3.5 etc], and beinging on bodily and mental suffering [§3.6 etc].

**1.2.2 Part II** (“when the senses *are* properly understood”)

1.2.2.1 Part II, **the positive cycle** has 6 sections, dealing with each of the 6 sense-bases and their related functions in a positive manner (the reverse of those in Part I). **The Madhu,piṇḍika Sutta** (M 18) presents this positive cycle as a *conscious* process of “discerning mental proliferation.”<sup>3</sup>

Each of these 6 sections has a **refrain**, showing how one who “knows and sees the sense-bases as they really are” is endowed with

- (1) the 3 trainings of the path, which leads to the development of
- (2) the “7 sets” of dharmas, which brings about
- (3) the concurrent arising of samatha and vipassana, leading to
- (4) realizing the 4 noble truths in their 4 functions (which are then defined), ending in
- (5) knowledge and liberation.

<sup>1</sup> While the tr here totals 14 pages (A4 size) (excluding the intro), I B Horner’s tr totals only 4 A5 (half A4 size) pp long (M:B 3:336-339). Bhikkhu Bodhi’s tr is even more abridged, only 3 A5 pp (M:ÑB 1137-1139). See L S Cousins’ important Review of Ñānamoli & Bodhi (trs), *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha* (1995), *Journal of Buddhist Ethics* 4, 1997 esp 261 f: <http://blogs.dickinson.edu/buddhistethics/files/2010/04/cous1.pdf>. See also “Translating difficulties,” SD 46.4 (3.3).

<sup>2</sup> M 18,16+17/1:111 f+ SD 6.14 (4) Theory of perception.

<sup>3</sup> M 18,18/1:112 + SD 6.14 (4) Theory of perception.

1.2.2.2 Part II (the practice section) can be **summarized** as follows: When we know and see a sense-faculty as it really is [§§9.1-9.2 etc], we would not be aroused by it [§9.3 etc], so that we do not accumulate that aggregate [§9.4 etc], and craving is abandoned [§9.5 etc]. We dwell happily in body and mind [§9.6].

The noble eightfold path arises by way of wisdom and concentration [§10.1 etc], but we must first have purified moral virtue [§§10.2-10.3 etc]. The eightfold path thus cultivated comprise the “7 sets” (the 37 limbs of awakening)<sup>4</sup> [§10.4 etc]. Then, both calm and insight arise [§10.5 etc]. This gives us direct knowledge into the 4 noble truths [§11.1 etc], thus:

- (1) we have comprehended the 5 aggregates; [§11.2 etc]
- (2) we have abandoned ignorance and craving for existence; [§11.3 etc]
- (3) we have cultivated calm and insight; and [§11.4 etc]
- (5) we have realized true knowledge and liberation. [§11.5 etc]

**1.3 SUTTA PRACTICE METHOD.** As in meditation, reading this penetrating Sutta, too, is best done in a gradual and enjoyable manner. Here is a suggested way of studying and reflecting on the Sutta:

**(A) Reading to understand**

- (1) “When the senses are *not* properly understood” [§3]. Begin by reading **Part I (1)** (on the eye) first: This is the “negative template” for Part I. Ask yourself: “What is this passage telling me?” (Not “What do I think this says?”) Just read the passage and listen with the inner ear. Then reflect on it, and try to recall what you have just read. Read the passage again until you are familiar with it. After each reading, spend a quiet moment reflecting on it.
- (2) When you feel ready, go on to read the rest of Part I [§§4-8] right through, connecting it with what you have understood from §3. This gives us a sort of summary of the teaching by way of the arising of suffering. However, if you find a deep connection with any part of this section, go on to reflect on it whenever you like. Go back to §3 to refresh if necessary or if you are inclined to.

**(B) Reading to practise**

- (3) “When the senses *are* properly understood” [§9]. When you have finished steps (1+2), go on to read and clearly understand **Part II (1)** [§§9.1-6] “When the eye is properly understood.” This is **the main Sutta template**, which is followed for the rest of the 6 sense-bases in this section of the Sutta.
- (4) Then read the refrain [§§10-11], which is the refrain template: this is found in all the rest of sections on the other sense-bases. In practice, effective meditation begins with *a happy body and mind*: this is the result of keeping the precepts well (and doing this reflection).
- (5) The 7 sets [§10.4]. Start by reading and remembering the list. When you feel ready, go on to re-search what they are.<sup>5</sup> Reflect on how these different teachings are connected to one another: It is said that being accomplished in any one of these 7 sets, especially the noble eightfold path, is the same as being accomplished in all the sets.
- (6) Balance of samatha and vipassana [§10.5]. Reflect on how calm and insight, concentration and wisdom, are interconnected.<sup>6</sup>
- (7) The 4 noble truths [§10.6-11.4]. Read the section as is, just as for A(1) above.
- (8) Repeat the same process for each of the other sense-bases, as above. Simply float this question in your mind and *let the question answer itself*: “How does each sense-base and its related dharma function in relation to the others?” (How are they connected?)<sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup> On the 7 sets and the 37 limbs of awakening, **Bodhi,pakkhiya,dhamma**, SD 10.1.

<sup>5</sup> See SD 9 (10c).

<sup>6</sup> See **Samatha and vipassana**, SD 41.1.

<sup>7</sup> For a summary of the practice, see also SD 47.1 (1.2.3.4).

## 2 Sutta comparison and analysis

### 2.1 SUTTA TITLE AND TEACHINGS

**2.1.1 Sutta title.** Some manuscripts have the title Saḷ-āyatana Vibhaṅga Sutta, the Discourse On The Analysis Of the 6 Sense-bases, but this is already the title of M 137, which does not have *cūla* or “lesser” to it; nor does the Mahā Saḷ-āyatana Sutta (M 149) have a *cūla* counterpart. In fact, the *mahā* of M 149 refers not to the title, but to the subject-matter, that is, with *saḷ-āyatana*, which is an adjective or adjectival noun, “that which is connected with the 6 sense-bases.”<sup>8</sup>

This meaning fits the whole Sutta very well, as it not only deals with the 6 sense-bases, but with related dharma, that is, their objects, their consciousnesses, their contacts, and the 3 types of feelings that lead to the arising of lust, which in turn ensure the continuation of the 5 aggregates, leading to rebirth, and to bodily and mental afflictions [2.1.2].

Hence, the title “the great sixfold sense-based discourse” (*mahā saḷ-āyatana sutta*). In fact, due to the Sutta title’s uniqueness, it can also be called simply as **the Saḷ-āyatana Sutta**, “the discourse relating to the sense-bases” or “the sense-based discourse.” However, on account of the great significance of its teachings, it perfectly deserves the prefix *mahā*, “great.”

**2.1.2 Sutta teachings.** The Mahā Saḷ-āyatana Sutta has a Chinese parallel in the Saṃyukta Āgama,<sup>9</sup> as well as a sutta quotation in Samatha,deva’s commentary (extant only in Tibetan) on the Abhidharma, -kośa Bhāṣya.<sup>10</sup> They all give a very similar exposition on the 6 sense-spheres. This exposition explains how a lack of proper knowledge and vision in regard to the 6 senses, their objects, their consciousnesses, their contacts, and the 3 types of feelings that lead to the arising of lust, which in turn ensure the continuation of the 5 aggregates, leading to rebirth, and to bodily and mental afflictions.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Comy: The Dharma exposition that is the illuminator of the great 6 sense-bases (*mahantānaṃ channaṃ āyatanānaṃ jotakam dhamma,pariyāyaṃ*, MA 5:103). On the prefixes *mahā* and *cūla* to sutta titles, see SD 13.1 (2).

<sup>9</sup> SĀ 305 @ T2.87a-c. While M 149 gives Jeta’s Grove as the venue, SĀ 305 and AbhkṬ give Kammāsa,dhamma (also the venue of **Satipatṭhāna Ss**, D 22 & M 10) in the Kuru country as their venue. On Kammāsa,dhamma, see SD 13.1 (1.3).

<sup>10</sup> AbhkṬ: D (4094) mgon pa, ju 203b1-205b6 or Q (5595) tu 232a5-234b8; see also Abhk 4:4, Pradhan 1967: 196,21, paralleling M 149/3:289,2, with its Chin counterparts in T1558 @ T29.69a22 and T1559 @ T29.226c28. For another quotation from AbhkṬ, see Analayo 2011 n111.

<sup>11</sup> SĀ 305 differs from the standard sequence of enumerating the 3 types of feeling, as it begins with “painful” feeling, 苦, followed by “pleasant” feeling, 樂, and then “neither-painful-nor-pleasant” feeling, 不苦不樂. The same sequence can be found in several other discourses in the Saṃyukta Āgama, see Analayo 2011 n110 for a list. Yet, says **Analayo**, other discourses in the same SĀ collection adopt the sequence found in the Pali discourses (and also in the AbhkṬ parallel to the present discourse, SĀ 305, see D (4094) mgon pa, ju 203b4 or Q (5595) tu 232a8), which begins with pleasant feelings. Some discourses in SĀ have both patterns. It is noteworthy that within a single discourse collection variations should occur in the case of such an elementary aspect of the teachings as the 3 types of feeling, “since from the perspective of the dynamics of transmission it would be natural for the reciters to adopt the same sequence throughout, and it is difficult to conceive of a cogent reason why they should have adopted different sequences. This is, however, not the only instance of such unexpected variations in the Saṃyukta Āgama” (2011 id). A similar case, notes Analayo, is the name Koṇḍañña which is rendered in 2 different ways (橋陳如 and 拘隣) within the same discourse: SĀ 379 @ T2.104a10: 世尊告尊者橋陳如, 知法未? 白佛, 已知, 世尊. 復告尊者橋陳如, 知法未? 拘隣白佛, 已知, 故善逝拘隣已知. Another case is SĀ 551 @ T2.144b4, which presents a stanza, followed by an explanation, and then concludes by repeating the stanza that has just been explained (T2.144c13). This repetition, however, differs considerably from the earlier stanza, as its first line reads 若斷一切流, instead of 斷一切諸流, the third line speaks of 諸欲, instead of 五欲, and the final line is quite different, see 復與世間, 不共言語靜訟, whereas earlier the final line reads 世間靜言訟, 畢竟不復為. These instances might be examples of a tendency described by **Zürcher** 1991: 288, where in early Chinese translations, “there is a strong tendency to avoid the monotonous effect of...verbatim repetition ...by introducing a certain amount of diversification and irregularity,” as a result of which “in the same translated scripture we often find various alternative forms and longer or shorter versions of the same cliché.” Relevant to the same topic would also be one of the maxims set up for correct translation attributed to Dào’ān (道安) in T2145 @ T55.52b26, see also Bingenheimer 2010:25 and Meier 1972:43, which emphasizes the, [sic] for the early Chinese translators apparently not self-evident, importance of respecting the repetitive nature of the Indian texts.

The Chinese and Tibetan versions add the familiar statement of suffering, that in this way, too, birth, decay, disease, death, and the whole great mass of suffering arise.<sup>12</sup> After this negative cycle [1.2.1], all three versions then give the same positive cycle where knowledge and vision are present, by which lust subsides and all their negative aspects end.

## 2.2 THE PATH-FACTORS

### 2.2.1 A 5-factored awakening

2.2.1.1 PATH-FACTORS: 8 OR 5? The Mahā Saḷāyatanika Sutta and its Chinese and Tibetan parallels then similarly show how with such knowledge and vision, we gain the following **5 path-factors**: (1) right view, (2) right thought [intention], (6) right effort, (7) right mindfulness, and (8) right concentration [§10.1 etc]. Right view and right thought constitute the wisdom aggregate (*paññā-k,khandha*), and right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration, the concentration aggregate (*samādhi-k,khandha*).

The Abhidhamma speaks of the “supramundane path” (*lok’uttara magga*) as comprising the 8 path-factors, that is, the limbs of the noble eightfold path. In other words, when we awaken as arhats, all the factors of the noble eightfold path are present.<sup>13</sup> This is merely a scholasticism with a completist bent, aimed at technical accuracy.

However, in the Mahā Saḷāyatanika Sutta, only 5 path-factors for the supramundane path are mentioned, that is to say, only the wisdom aggregate (right view and right thought), and the concentration aggregate (right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration). In other words, here we only need these 5 qualities for awakening.

Note that the Sutta does not say that “(3) bodily action, (4) verbal action, and (5) livelihood” [§10.2] are present, but that these 3 “have been utterly purified earlier on” [§10.3]. In other words, this is the moral foundation for spiritual progress. The cultivation of body and speech is the basis for mental cultivation, and the right and ready body-mind is the vehicle for spiritual liberation. Moral virtue, in other words, is inherent in an awakened person.<sup>14</sup> Hence, it is natural that a monastic, for example, would remain strictly celibate, or a lay teacher on the path to fully keep to the 5 precepts or whatever precepts he has undertaken to keep.<sup>15</sup>

This is very different from saying something like a teacher or guru is above all moral rights and wrongs, good and evil, because he is “highly attained” or even “perfectly enlightened.” This is a clear contradiction in terms: it is like saying “since he is good, he need not be good”! It also does not imply that a monastic (or anyone) at the higher stages of the path no longer keeps the moral precepts or is “above” moral virtue, “but simply that he does not have to work at it—he keeps *sīla* naturally and, as it were, spontaneously.”<sup>16</sup>

2.2.1.2 THE 3 ABSTINENCES. The “missing” 3 path-factors, according to the Sutta, are **bodily action, verbal action, and livelihood**, which are of course, respectively right speech, right action and right livelihood. They constitute the moral virtue aggregate (*sīla-k,khandha*), which should be understood as having been developed earlier [§10.2-3].<sup>17</sup>

<sup>12</sup> SĀ 305 @ T2.87b13 and D (4094) Mgon pa, ju 204a1 or Q (5595) tu 232b6. A discourse quotation paralleling the cultivation of the path (M 149/3:289,9), can also be found in Abhk 6.70 (Pradhan 1967: 385,6); see also T1558 @ T29.133a15, T1559 @ T29.284b12, and D (4094) Mgon pa, nyu 41b1 or Q (5595) thu 80a7.

<sup>13</sup> See Abhs:BRS §VII.30; Abhs:SR 181; Abhs:WG 264 f.

<sup>14</sup> See Gethin 2001:214 f.

<sup>15</sup> On the problem of false teachers, see **Bad friendship**, SD 64.7

<sup>16</sup> Gethin 2001”215. See **Beyond good and evil**, SD 18.7.

<sup>17</sup> AbhkṬ differs in including *right speech* among the factors developed by knowledge and vision (D (4094) mgon pa, ju 205a2 or Q (5595) tu 234a1), so that, according to this version, *only* right action and right livelihood have been developed earlier. A minor difference between the other 2 versions is that SĀ 305 @ T2.87c1 lists the factors developed earlier as “right speech, right action, right livelihood,” 正語, 正業, 正命, whereas M 149/3:289,7 lists them differently as “bodily action, verbal action, and livelihood,” *kāya,kammaṃ vacī,kammaṃ ājīvo*. A quotation of the present passage in the Abhidharma,kośa Bhāṣya (Abhk 4:4, Pradhan 1967:196,23), agrees with SĀ 305 sequence: *samyak vāk,karmant’ājīvah*, T1558 @ T29.69a22: 正語業命, and T1559 @ T29.226c28: 正語正業正命, a sequence also followed by Pali comy gloss: *vācā,kammant’ājīva* (MA 5:103,23). **Analayo** notes that “From the perspective of oral



In the Abhidhamma, these 3 factors are closely related to the 3 “abstinences” (*virati*), and said to be “beautiful” (*sobhana*), or wholesome, mental factors behind the deliberate avoidance of wrong conduct by way of “**bodily action, verbal action, and livelihood.**” In mundane consciousness (that of a worldly or unawakened person), the abstinences work only when we *intentionally* refrain from a wrong conduct for which an opportunity has arisen. When we refrain from bad deeds, even without the proper supporting conditions to do so, this is not a case of abstinence but of pure moral conduct (*sīla*). (DhsA 103 f)

The commentators and Abhidhamma tradition distinguish 3 types of abstinences (*virati*):

- (1) **natural abstinence** (*sampatta, virati*) is not doing bad deeds when the opportunity arises due to considering our age, social position, level of education, etc, such as refraining from stealing for fear that our reputation would be hurt if we were caught.<sup>18</sup>
- (2) **votive abstinence** (*samādāna, virati*), that is, through having undertaken the moral precepts, especially the 5 precepts to abstain from taking life, from stealing, from sexual misconduct, from lying, and from taking intoxicants and addictives.<sup>19</sup>
- (3) **full abstinence** (*samuccheda, virati*) or “bridge-burning” abstinence (*setu, ghāta, virati*) (DA 1:-305), that is, by eradicating the latent tendencies.<sup>20</sup> In Abhidhamma lingo, this is associated with the supramundane path consciousness which arises and uproots our dispositions towards bad deeds. Of the 3 abstinences, only this is supramundane. (SA 2:150)

The 3 abstinences have the respective characteristics of non-transgression through bodily misconduct, through wrong speech, and through wrong livelihood. Their function is to shrink back from bad deeds. Their proximate conditions are the special qualities of faith, moral shame, moral fear, effort, wisdom, without anger, with few wishes, a spiritual friend, right view.<sup>21</sup> They should be regarded as the mind’s aversion to wrong-doing.<sup>22</sup>

tradition, a result of the departure from the usual sequence in M 149 by listing *kaya, kammaṃ vacī, kammaṃ ājīvo* is that the final two words produce assonance through the long -ī- in second position (the first two words are anyway related through homoioteleuton\* by sharing the same -*kammaṃ* as their second part), whereas to recite *vacī, kammaṃ kāya, kammaṃ ājīvo*, a sequence that would accord with the standard listings of the corresponding factors of the noble eightfold path, would not produce such *ā* assonance. It seems, however, less probable that this would have influenced the sequence of the terms, since usually the influence of assonance or of the principle of waxing syllables on listings is overruled by doctrinal requirements, which would be the case for the sequence of the factors of the noble eightfold path.” On “waxing syllables,” see Analayo 2009v. [\***Homoioteleuton** or homeoteleuton (Gk “like ending”) (1) The occurrence of a similar endings in two or more adjacent words, clauses or lines. (2) An error, usu of omission, made in the copying of a text, when two words standing closely together and having similar or identical endings. The copyist skips from the first of these words on to the second, and so omits those in between.]

<sup>18</sup> Further see **Moral shame and moral fear**, SD 2.5.

<sup>19</sup> On def of the first 4 precepts, see **Sāleyyaka S** (M 41/1:285-290), SD 5.7 (2). On the 5<sup>th</sup> precept, see **Sigāl’ovāda S** (D 31,8/3:182 f), SD 4.1. See also **Sīlānussati**, SD 15.11.

<sup>20</sup> Latent tendencies (*anusayā*). There are 7 of them: (1) lust for sensual pleasures (*kāma-c, chanda*); (2) repulsion (*paṭigha*); (3) wrong view (*diṭṭhi*); (4) spiritual doubt (*vicikicchā*); (5) conceit (*māna*); (6) lust for existence (*bhava, rāga*); (7) ignorance (*avijjā*). They are listed in **Saṅgīti S** (D 33,2.3(12)/3:254), **Anusaya S** (A 7.11+12/ 4:9) and **Vibhaṅga** (Vbh 383). They are deeply embedded in our mind through past habitual acts and can only be uprooted on attaining the Path. (3)-(4) are eliminated upon streamwinning; (1)-(2) upon non-return; (5)-(7) upon arhathood. See Abhs 7.9: “The latent dispositions (*anusaya*) are defilements which ‘lie along with’ (*anuseti*) the mental process to which they belong, rising to the surface as obsessions whenever they meet with suitable conditions. The term ‘latent dispositions’ highlights the fact that the defilements are liable to arise so long as they have not been eradicated by the supramundane paths. Though all defilements are, in a sense, *anusayas*, the 7 mentioned here are the most prominent.” (Abhs:B 268). See also Abhs:SR 172; and also **Madhu, piṇḍika S** (M 18), SD 6.14 (5) & **Sall’atthana S** (S 36.3), SD 5.5 Intro.

<sup>21</sup> Respectively, *saddha...hirima...ottappī...āraddha, vīriyo...paññavā...akkodhano anupanāhī... app’icchā...kalyāṇa, mitto...sammā, diṭṭhiko*. These are the 10 qualities of a true individual (*sappurisa*), ie, a true practitioner: see **Naḷakapana S 1** (A 10.67/5:124).

<sup>22</sup> Eg DhsA 103 f :: DhsA:PR 136 f; Abhs:BRS §II.6; Abhs:SR 97; Abhs:WG 64 f.

2.2.1.3 THE GROUND FOR GOOD. The eightfold path is “the only path, (there is) no other” (*eso va maggo natth’añño*) to true happiness and spiritual liberation (Dh 274). This is because it contains all that is good and instrumental in cultivating our body (including speech) and our mind, and freeing us from suffering. In theoretical or doctrinal terms, the complete “path” (*magga*) comprises **the 7 sets**, which are: the 4 satipatthanas, the 4 right efforts, the 4 paths to spiritual power, the 5 spiritual faculties, the 5 spiritual powers, and the 7 awakening-factors [§10.4 etc], all of which comprise **the 37 limbs of awakening** (*bodhi, pakkhiya dhamma*).<sup>23</sup> The path, in other words, is the fulfillment of the 7 sets.<sup>24</sup>

**2.3 SAMATHA AND VIPASSANA.** The Pali and Tibetan versions continue by stating that this practice brings about the concurrent arising of calm and insight [§10.5 etc].<sup>25</sup> Notice that §10.4 highlights the noble eightfold path, even suggesting (note the “thus”) that the other 6 of the 7 sets arise through the eightfold or are included in the eightfold path. This is not difficult to understand because all good states are included in the path.

The statement—“These two states—samatha and vipassana [calm and insight]—occur as yoked together to him” [§10.6]—is strategically located immediately after the passage on the 7 sets (headed by the noble eightfold path). In fact, this is the twin goal of the eightfold path: calm to prepare the mind, and insight to free the mind.

While the aggregates of moral virtue and of samadhi prepare us for mental calm and clarity, the aggregates of samadhi and of wisdom prepare us for insight and liberation. In this sense, calm and insight are the whole of the eightfold path. They are not stages or sections of the path, but parallel lanes in a highway, or twin wires in a cable. They work and flow together with a common purpose and destination; that of liberation.<sup>26</sup>

#### 2.4 THE PRACTICAL NOBLE-TRUTH SEQUENCE

**2.4.1** The Mahā Saḷāyatanika Sutta and its parallels continue by examining 4 functions of penetrative insight [§10.6], though they differ in the sequence of the last 2 functions, which are here inverted.<sup>27</sup> This sequence, on account of its rarity, is probably an ancient one, older than the better known Dhamma, cakka Pavattana Sutta version. The sequence found in the Chinese (SĀ 305) and Tibetan (AbhkṬ) versions, however, follows the standard sequence of the 4 noble truths of that found in **the Dhamma, cakka Pavattana S** (S 56.11).<sup>28</sup>

This better known “**Dhamma, cakka**” sequence or theoretical sequence is familiar listed as “1-2-3-4,” that is,

suffering→arising→ending→path. (S 56.11,5-8) + SD 1.1 (6.2.2.2)

The “**Saḷāyatanika**” sequence, on the other hand, is given as “1-2-4-3,” thus:

suffering→arising→path→ending [§§11+14+17+20+23+26].

This is probably the original or more ancient sequence, which we can call the natural sequence because it follows the natural; sequence of theory-understanding-practice-path; it can also be called the practice

<sup>23</sup> M 149/3:287-290 @ SD 41.9. On the 7 sets, see **Bodhi, pakkhiya dhamma**, SD 10.1; also Gethin, *The Buddhist Path to Awakening*, 2001:241 f, 272, 282.

<sup>24</sup> Gethin, op cit, 2001:321.

<sup>25</sup> M 149/3:289,16 and D (4094) mgon pa, ju 205a4 or Q (5595) tu 234a4. On *samatha* and *vipassanā* undertaken in conjunction, see also A 4:170/2:157,15, the Śrāvaka, bhūmi (Shukla 1973:404,4; ŚSG 2010:26,3; Chin counterpart: T1579 @ T30.458b4), and Analayo 2009z. See also **Samatha and vipassana**, SD 41.1.

<sup>26</sup> For a parallel passage, see **Piṇḍa, pāta Parisuddhi S** (M 151,13-19/3:298 f), SD 69.1. See also SD 41.5 (4.2) & Gethin 2001:266.

<sup>27</sup> M 149/3:289,20, SĀ 305 @ T2.87c5, and D (4094) mgon pa, ju 205a5 or Q (5595) tu 234a6. The same 4 functions of the cultivation of penetrative insight recur—in the sequence found in SĀ 305 and AbhkṬ—in **Dhamma, cakka Pavattana S** (S 56.11/5:422,6), SD 1.1, which proceeds from what is to be “fully understood” (*pariññeyya*), to what is to be “abandoned” (*pahātabba*), and what is to be “realized” (*sacchikātabba*), to what is to be “cultivated” (*bhāvetabba*): For a survey of some parallel versions showing the same pattern, see Chung 2006.

<sup>28</sup> S 56.11,9-12/5:422 @ SD 1.1.

sequence. The natural sequence is also found in **the Āgantuka Sutta** (S 45.159), **the Pariññeyya Sutta** (S 56.29), and other suttas,<sup>29</sup> although it is not as common as the better known theoretical sequence.

**2.4.2** The “**Saḷ-āyatanika**” (M 149) sequence of the 4 truths (arranged as 1-2-4-3) [§§11+14+17+20+23+26], along with their explanations, recurs on their own in **the Abhiññā Sutta** (A 4.251).<sup>30</sup> Although the Dhamma,cakka sequence of functions is better known, it is likely that the Saḷ-āyatanika sequence is much older. In other words, it is probably the original sequence, which later, for the sake of easier teaching, follows the theoretical (or teaching) sequence. Understandably, the later Dhamma,cakka sequence is better known throughout Buddhist literature, as it is a more convenient teaching model.<sup>31</sup>

**2.5 THE 5 AGGREGATES.** The Mahā Saḷ-āyatanika Sutta says that the 5 aggregates of clinging are to be fully understood [§11.1 etc], whereas the Chinese and Tibetan versions state that name-and-form should be fully understood.<sup>32</sup> The three versions agree that ignorance (*avijjā*) and craving for existence (*bhava, taṇhā*) should be abandoned, while knowledge (*viññā*) and liberation (*vimutti*) should be realized.

According to the Pali and Tibetan versions, calm and insight should be developed, whereas the Chinese version only mentions insight.<sup>33</sup>

The Chinese and Tibetan versions conclude that a monk who is accomplished in the 4 functions of penetrative insight [2.4] can be reckoned as having eradicated craving and gone beyond suffering.<sup>34</sup>

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## The Great Sixfold Sense-based Discourse

M 149

1 Thus have I heard.

At one time, the Blessed One was staying in Anātha,piṇḍika’s park in Jeta’s grove near Sāvattihī.

There the Blessed One addressed the monks, “Bhikshus!”

“Bhante!” the monks replied to the Blessed One in assent.

The Blessed One said this:

2 “I will teach you, bhikshus, regarding **the great 6 sense-bases** (*mahā saḷ-āyatana*).

Listen to it. Pay close attention. I will speak.”

“Yes, bhante,” the monks replied to the Blessed One.

The Blessed One said this:

### I. WHEN THE SENSES ARE *NOT* PROPERLY UNDERSTOOD<sup>35</sup>

<sup>29</sup> S 45.159/5:52, SD 74.10; S 56.29/5:436.

<sup>30</sup> A 4.251/2:246 f [A:B 4.254], SD 85.3. See also esp **Mahā Niddesa**: Nm 1:21, 40, 94, 149, 2:271, 349, 456, 460, 494; **Cūḷa Niddesa**: Nc:Be 31, 35, 64, 85, 90, 232. **Paṭisambhidā,magga** has both sequences: Dhamma,cakka seq, Pm 1:46, 48; Saḷ-āyatanika seq, 1:4, 184×2, 187, 294×3. **Vibhaṅga**: Vbh 426×12, 427×14, 428; Kvu 86, 88, 107, 108, 170, 216×2; Peṭk 143; **Nett** 311/59, 651/111×2, 656/111, 661/112, 897/175; Miln 69.

<sup>31</sup> There is another sequence, a unique one, arranged as 1-4-2-3, found in **Sela S** (Sn 559 = Tha 828 = M 92,19, SD 45.7). This unique sequence is clearly the result of poetic licence. See also SD 1.1 (6.2.2.2).

<sup>32</sup> M 149 @ M 3:289,23: *pañc’upādāna-k,khandha*, SĀ 305 @ T2.87c8: 名色, and D (4094) mgon pa, ju 205a6 or Q (5595) tu 234a7: *ming dang gzugs*.

<sup>33</sup> M 149 @ M 3:289,29: *samatho ca vipassanā ca* and D (4094) mgon pa, ju 205b2 or Q (5595) tu 234b3: *zhi gnas dang lhag mthong*, whereas SĀ 305 @ T2.87c11 only mentions 正觀 (which might be an error for 止觀, in which case the 3 versions would be in agreement).

<sup>34</sup> SĀ 305 @ T2.87c14 and D (4094) mgon pa, ju 205b5 or Q (5595) tu 234b6.

(1) When the eye is not properly understood

3 Bhikshus,

when **the eye** is not known, not seen, as it really is,<sup>36</sup>

when form is not known, not seen, as it really is,

when eye-consciousness is not known, not seen, as it really is,

when eye-contact is not known, not seen, as it really is—

3.2 whatever that arises dependent on this eye-contact that is felt as *pleasant* or as *painful* or as *neutral*—

that, too, is not known, not seen, as it really is.<sup>37</sup>

3.3 One is aroused<sup>38</sup> by the eye.

One is aroused by form.

One is aroused by eye-consciousness.

One is aroused by eye-contact.

One is aroused, too, by whatever that arises dependent on this eye-contact

that is felt as *pleasant* or as *painful* or as *neutral* .

3.4 When one dwells yoked to that arousing and deluded by it, seeking gratification, the 5 aggregates of clinging continue to pile up upon one.<sup>39</sup>

3.5 And one's **craving**—bringing rebirth, accompanied by delight and lust, running after pleasure here and there—increases for one.

3.6 One's bodily troubles, too, increase; [288] one's mental troubles, too, increase.

One's bodily burning, too, increases; one's mental burning, too, increases.

One's bodily fevers, too, increase; one's mental fevers, too, increase.

One experiences both bodily suffering and mental suffering.

(2) When the ear is not properly understood

4 Bhikshus,

when **the ear** is not known, not seen, as it really is,

when sound is not known, not seen, as it really is,

when ear-consciousness is not known, not seen, as it really is,

when ear-contact is not known, not seen, as it really is—

4.2 whatever that arises dependent on this ear-contact that is felt as *pleasant* or as *painful* or as *neutral*—

that, too, is not known, not seen, as it really is.

4.3 One is aroused by the ear.

<sup>35</sup> **Madhu,piṇḍika S** (M 18) first presents this negative cycle as an *unconscious* process (M 18,16) and then as a *conscious* process (ie, discerning mental proliferation) (M 18,17): see SD 6.14.

<sup>36</sup> *Cakkhum bhikkhave, ajānaṃ apassaṃ yathā, bhūtaṃ*. Comy: That is, when one does not know and see the eye (etc) by way of insight knowledge and path knowledge (MA 5:103). However, on a simpler, more mundane level, we can practise the perception of impermanence on these sense-faculties and their functions: see (**Anicca**) **Cakkhu S** (S 25.1), SD 16.7.

<sup>37</sup> *Yam p'idaṃ cakkhu, samphassa, paccayā uppajjati vedayitaṃ sukhaṃ vā dukkhaṃ vā adukkham-asukhaṃ vā, tam pi ajānaṃ apassaṃ yathā, bhūtaṃ*.

<sup>38</sup> “Is aroused (by),” **sarajjati**, “to be attached to.” from *sam* + √RAJ, “to colour” + *ya* (BHS *sārajyati*; Skt *samra-jyate*): S 2:172, 3:69 f, 4:10 f, A 1:260. N *sā, rāga* = *samrāga* (from *sam* + √RAJ), “affection, infatuation, attachment” (V 2:258; M 1:17; A 1:264; S 3:69 f, 93; Dhs 1059, 1230); opp *asārāga* (Dhs 32, 312, 315). Adj *sa, rāga*: *sa* (3) + *rāga*, “connected with lust” (D 1:79, 2:299; M 1:59; Vism 410).

<sup>39</sup> *Tassa sārattassa saṃyuttassa sammūlhasa assādānupassino viharato āyatim pañc'upādāna-k, khandhā upacayaṃ gacchanti*. *Āyatim* is usu tr as “further, the future” but I have taken it idiomatically as “continue.” Craving that arises and remains in the eye and forms, etc, holds them with clinging, and this creates karma that can produce new aggregates for or in the next existence.



One is aroused by sound.  
 One is aroused by ear-consciousness.  
 One is aroused by ear-contact.  
 One is aroused, too, by whatever that arises dependent on this ear-contact that is felt as *pleasant* or as *painful* or as *neutral*

4.4 *When one dwells yoked to that arousing and deluded by it, seeking gratification, the 5 aggregates of clinging continue to pile up upon one.*

4.5 *And one's **craving**—bringing rebirth, connected with delight and lust, running after pleasure here and there—increases for one.*

4.6 *One's bodily troubles, too, increase; one's mental troubles, too, increase.  
 One's bodily burning, too, increases; one's mental burning, too, increases.  
 One's bodily fevers, too, increase; one's mental fevers, too, increase.  
 One experiences both bodily suffering and mental suffering.*

### (3) When the nose is not properly understood

5 Bhikshus,  
 when **the nose** is not known, not seen, as it really is,  
 when smell is not known, not seen, as it really is,  
 when nose-consciousness is not known, not seen, as it really is,  
 when nose-contact is not known, not seen, as it really is—

5.2 whatever that arises dependent on this nose-contact that is felt as *pleasant* or as *painful* or as *neutral*—

that, too, is not known, not seen, as it really is.

5.3 One is aroused by the nose.  
 One is aroused by smell.  
 One is aroused by nose-consciousness.  
 One is aroused by nose-contact.  
 One is aroused, too, by whatever that arises dependent on this nose-contact that is felt as *pleasant* or as *painful* or as *neutral*

5.4 *When one dwells yoked to that arousing and deluded by it, seeking gratification, the 5 aggregates of clinging continue to pile up upon one.*

5.5 *And one's **craving**—bringing rebirth, connected with delight and lust, running after pleasure here and there—increases for one.*

5.6 *One's bodily troubles, too, increase; one's mental troubles, too, increase.  
 One's bodily burning, too, increases; one's mental burning, too, increases.  
 One's bodily fevers, too, increase; one's mental fevers, too, increase.  
 One experiences both bodily suffering and mental suffering.*

### (4) When the tongue is not properly understood

6 Bhikshus,  
 when **the tongue** is not known, not seen, as it really is,  
 when taste is not known, not seen, as it really is,  
 when tongue-consciousness is not known, not seen, as it really is,  
 when tongue-contact is not known, not seen, as it really is—

6.2 whatever that arises dependent on this tongue-contact that is felt as *pleasant* or as *painful* or as *neutral*—

that, too, is not known, not seen, as it really is.

6.3 One is aroused by the tongue.  
 One is aroused by taste.  
 One is aroused by tongue -consciousness.

One is aroused by tongue-contact.  
 One is aroused, too, by whatever that arises dependent on this tongue-contact that is felt as *pleasant* or as *painful* or as *neutral*

6.4 *When one dwells yoked to that arousing and deluded by it, seeking gratification, the 5 aggregates of clinging continue to pile up upon one.*

6.5 *And one's **craving**—bringing rebirth, connected with delight and lust, running after pleasure here and there—increases for one.*

6.6 *One's bodily troubles, too, increase; one's mental troubles, too, increase.  
 One's bodily burning, too, increases; one's mental burning, too, increases.  
 One's bodily fevers, too, increase; one's mental fevers, too, increase.  
 One experiences both bodily suffering and mental suffering.*

### (5) When the body is not properly understood

7 Bhikshus,  
 when **the body** is not known, not seen, as it really is,  
 when touch is not known, not seen, as it really is,  
 when body-consciousness is not known, not seen, as it really is,  
 when body-contact is not known, not seen, as it really is—

7.2 whatever that arises dependent on this body-contact that is felt as *pleasant* or as *painful* or as *neutral*—

that, too, is not known, not seen, as it really is.

7.3 One is aroused by the body.  
 One is aroused by touch.  
 One is aroused by body-consciousness.  
 One is aroused by body-contact.  
 One is aroused, too, by whatever that arises dependent on this body-contact that is felt as *pleasant* or as *painful* or as *neutral*

7.4 *When one dwells yoked to that arousing and deluded by it, seeking gratification, the 5 aggregates of clinging continue to pile up upon one.*

7.5 *And one's **craving**—bringing rebirth, connected with delight and lust, running after pleasure here and there—increases for one.*

7.6 *One's bodily troubles, too, increase; one's mental troubles, too, increase.  
 One's bodily burning, too, increases; one's mental burning, too, increases.  
 One's bodily fevers, too, increase; one's mental fevers, too, increase.  
 One experiences both bodily suffering and mental suffering.*

### (6) When the mind is not properly understood

8 Bhikshus,  
 when **the mind** is not known, not seen, as it really is,  
 when mind-object [thought] is not known, not seen, as it really is,  
 when mind-consciousness is not known, not seen, as it really is,  
 when mind-contact is not known, not seen, as it really is—

8.2 whatever that arises dependent on this mind-contact that is felt as *pleasant* or as *painful* or as *neutral*—

that, too, is not known, not seen, as it really is.

8.3 One is aroused by the mind.  
 One is aroused by mind-object [thought].  
 One is aroused by mind-consciousness.  
 One is aroused by mind-contact.  
 One is aroused, too, by whatever that arises dependent on this mind-contact

that is felt as *pleasant* or as *painful* or as *neutral*

8.4 *When one dwells yoked to that arousing and deluded by it, seeking gratification, the 5 aggregates of clinging continue to pile up upon one.*

8.5 *And one's **craving**—bringing rebirth, connected with delight and lust, running after pleasure here and there—increases for one.*

8.6 <i>One's bodily troubles, too, increase;</i>	<i>one's mental troubles, too, increase.</i>
<i>One's bodily burning, too, increases;</i>	<i>one's mental burning, too, increases.</i>
<i>One's bodily fevers, too, increase;</i>	<i>one's mental fevers, too, increase.</i>
<i>One experiences both bodily suffering</i>	<i>and mental suffering.</i>

## II. WHEN THE SENSES *ARE* PROPERLY UNDERSTOOD<sup>40</sup>

### THE EYE

#### (1) When the eye is properly understood

9 But, bhikshus,

when <b>the eye</b>	is known and seen as it really is, <sup>41</sup>
when form	is known and seen as it really is,
when eye-consciousness	is known and seen as it really is,
when eye-contact	is known and seen as it really is—

9.2 whatever that arises dependent on this eye-contact that is felt as *pleasant* or as *painful* or as *neutral*—

that, too,	is known and seen as it really is.
------------	------------------------------------

9.3 One is <i>not</i> aroused by	the eye.
One is <i>not</i> aroused by	form.
One is <i>not</i> aroused by	eye-consciousness.
One is <i>not</i> aroused by	eye-contact.
One is <i>not</i> aroused, too, by	whatever that arises dependent on this <u>eye-contact</u> that is felt as <i>pleasant</i> or as <i>painful</i> or as <i>neutral</i> .

### THE REFRAIN

#### Craving is abandoned

9.4 *When one does not dwell yoked, not deluded, by that arousing, not seeking gratification, the 5 aggregates of clinging do not continue to pile up upon one.*

9.5 *And one's **craving**—that which brings rebirth, accompanied by delight and lust, running after pleasure here and there—is abandoned by one.*

#### Happy body and mind

9.6 One's bodily troubles, too, is abandoned;	one's mental troubles, too, is abandoned.
One's bodily burning, too, is abandoned;	one's mental burning, too, is abandoned.
One's bodily fevers, too, are abandoned;	one's mental fevers, too, are abandoned. [289]
One experiences both bodily happiness	and mental happiness.

#### Accomplishment in concentration and wisdom

<sup>40</sup> **Madhu, piṇḍika S** (M 18,18) presents this positive cycle as a *conscious* process of “discerning mental proliferation”: see SD 6.14.

<sup>41</sup> That is, when one knows and sees the eye (etc) by way of insight knowledge and path knowledge (MA 5:104).

10 For one whose <u>view</u> is in accordance with true reality, there is	right view.
For one whose <u>thought</u> is in accordance with true reality, there is	right thought.
For one whose <u>effort</u> is in accordance with true reality, there is	right effort.
For one whose <u>mindfulness</u> is in accordance with true reality, there is	right mindfulness.
For one whose <u>samadhi</u> is in accordance with true reality, there is	right samadhi.

### Accomplishment in moral virtue

10.2 However, his bodily action, verbal action and livelihood<sup>42</sup> have been utterly purified earlier on.<sup>43</sup>

10.3 Thus, for him, this noble eightfold path has been brought to fulfillment by cultivation.<sup>44</sup>

### The 7 sets

10.4 FULFILLING THE 37 LIMBS OF AWAKENING<sup>45</sup>

(1) Through the cultivation of this	noble eightfold path <sup>46</sup> thus,	<i>ariya aṭṭh'aṅgika magga</i>
(2) one brings to fulfillment by cultivating	the 4 focuses of mindfulness, <sup>47</sup> too;	<i>catu sati'paṭṭhāna</i>
(3) one brings to fulfillment by cultivating	the 4 right strivings, <sup>48</sup> too;	<i>catu samma-p, padhāna</i>
(4) one brings to fulfillment by cultivating	the 4 paths to spiritual success, <sup>49</sup> too;	<i>catu iddhi, pāda</i>
(5) one brings to fulfillment by cultivating	the 5 spiritual faculties, <sup>50</sup> too;	<i>pañc'indriya</i>
(6) one brings to fulfillment by cultivating	the 5 spiritual powers, <sup>51</sup> too;	<i>pañca bala</i>
(7) one brings to fulfillment by cultivating	the 7 awakening-factors, <sup>52</sup> too;	<i>satta bojhaṅga</i>

### Balance of samatha and vipassana

<sup>42</sup> This is a ref to *ājīv'aṭṭhamaka sīla*, lit “moral virtue with (right) livelihood as the eighth,” ie the threefold bodily purity (*kāya, sucarita*) (abstaining from killing, stealing and celibacy) and the fourfold right speech (*vacī, sucarita*) (speech that is truthful, unifying, pleasant and useful) (M 149.10//3:289). “Right livelihood” is not an additional item here, but an integral part of the “moral virtue” aggregate (*sila-k, khandha*), in association with right action and right speech of the eightfold path, ie, as *sammā kammantā*, *sammā vācā* and *sammā ājīva*. (Vism 11,30; DhsA 396,11, cf 220,5 f (ad Dhs 301); MA 2:382,3 f; AA 2:72,21)

<sup>43</sup> *Pubb'eva kho pan'assa kāya, kammaṃ vacī, kammaṃ ājīvo suparisuddho hoti*. These 3 path factors—right action, right speech, right livelihood (constituting the moral training aggregate)—have already been accomplished here, so that it forms the solid base for the contemplation of sense-bases and related states. From the context here, we apparently should regard the 8 path-factors as being on a fundamental or mundane level. Subcomy, following the Abhidhamma tradition, identifies them with those factors in one with the highest insight cultivation immediately before attaining the supramundane path. Only in this stage are the former 5 path-factors fully operative (the 3 factors of the morality aggregate have already been accomplished before insight meditation). When the supramundane path arises, all 8 factors arise simultaneously, with the 3 morality path-factors functioning to remove defilements responsible for moral transgression in speech, action and livelihood. (MAT:Be 2:434)

<sup>44</sup> *Evam assāyam ariyo aṭṭh'aṅgiko maggo bhāvanā, paripūrim gacchati*.

<sup>45</sup> On these 7 sets, ie, the 37 limbs of awakening (*bodhi, pakkhiya, dhamma*), see SD 9 (10.3) & SD 10.1 (1).

<sup>46</sup> The noble eightfold path (*ariya aṭṭh'aṅgika magga*) comprises right view, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration. See SD 6.10.

<sup>47</sup> The 4 focuses of mindfulness (*catu sati'paṭṭhāna*) are the contemplations of the body, feeling, of the mind, and of phenomena [realities]. See SD 13.

<sup>48</sup> The 4 right strivings (*catu padhāna*) are the efforts (1) to prevent unarisen bad, (2) to abandon arisen bad, (3) to cultivate unarisen good, and (4) to maintain arisen good. See SD 10.2.

<sup>49</sup> The 4 path to spiritual success (*catu iddhi, pāda*) are (1) the desire to act, (2) effort, (3) mind, and (4) investigation. See SD 10.3.

<sup>50</sup> The 5 spiritual faculties (*pañc'indriya*) are those of (1) faith, (2) effort, (3) mindfulness, (4) concentration, and (5) wisdom. See SD 10.4.

<sup>51</sup> The 5 spiritual powers (*pañca bala*) are those of (1) faith, (2) effort, (3) mindfulness, (4) concentration, and (5) wisdom. See SD 10.5.

<sup>52</sup> The 7 awakening factors (*satta bojhaṅga*) are those of (1) mindfulness, (2) investigation of states, (3) effort, (4) zest, (5) tranquillity, (6) concentration, and (7) equanimity. See SD 10.15.

10.5 These two states—samatha and vipassana [calm and insight]—occur as yoked together to him.<sup>53</sup>

## THE 4 NOBLE TRUTHS

### The 4 functions of the noble truths

#### 11 THE NATURAL SEQUENCE OF TRUTHS

- (1) Those things to be **comprehended** by direct knowledge, one *comprehends* by direct knowledge.  
 (2) Those things to be **abandoned** by direct knowledge, one *abandons* by direct knowledge.  
 (3) Those things to be **cultivated** by direct knowledge, one *cultivates* by direct knowledge.  
 (4) Those things to be **realized** by direct knowledge, one *realizes* by direct knowledge.<sup>54</sup>

11.2 And what things, bhikshus, should be *comprehended* by direct knowledge?

The answer to this should be: **the 5 aggregates of clinging**, that is to say:

- |                                        |                        |                                  |
|----------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| (1) the aggregate of clinging that is  | <u>form</u> ,          | <i>rūpūpādāna-k, khandha</i>     |
| (2) the aggregate of clinging that is  | <u>feeling</u> ,       | <i>vedanūpādāna-k, khandha</i>   |
| (3) the aggregate of clinging that is  | <u>perception</u> ,    | <i>saññūpādāna-k, khandha</i>    |
| (4) the aggregate of clinging that are | <u>formations</u> ,    | <i>sankhārūpādāna-k, khandha</i> |
| (5) the aggregate of clinging that is  | <u>consciousness</u> . | <i>viññānūpādāna-k, khandha</i>  |

These are the things that should be comprehended by direct knowledge.

11.3 And what things, bhikshus, should be *abandoned* by direct knowledge?

Ignorance and craving for existence.

These are the things that should be abandoned by direct knowledge.

11.4 And what things, bhikshus, should be *cultivated* by direct knowledge?

Samatha and vipassana [calm and insight].<sup>55</sup>

These are the things that should be cultivated by direct knowledge.

11.5 And what [290] things, bhikshus, should be *realized* by direct knowledge?

Knowledge and liberation. [Spiritual knowledge (*vijjā*) and spiritual liberation (*vimutti*).]<sup>56</sup>

These are the things that should be realized by direct knowledge.

## THE EAR

### (2) When the ear is properly understood

12 But, bhikshus,

- |                        |                                    |
|------------------------|------------------------------------|
| when <b>the ear</b>    | is known and seen as it really is, |
| when sound             | is known and seen as it really is, |
| when ear-consciousness | is known and seen as it really is, |
| when ear-contact       | is known and seen as it really is— |

12.2 whatever that arises dependent on this ear-contact that is felt as *pleasant* or as *painful* or as *neutral*—

<sup>53</sup> Comy says that this refers to the simultaneous arising of calm and insight in the supramundane path. Calm is present in right concentration, while insight is present in right view (MA 5:104). For a parallel passage, see **Pinḍa-pāta Parisuddhi S** (M 151, 13-19/3:298 f), SD 69.1. See **Samatha & Vipassanā**, SD 41.1. See (2.3).

<sup>54</sup> These are the 4 functions of the supramundane path: comprehending the truth that is suffering, abandoning the arising of suffering, realizing the ending of suffering, and cultivating the path leading to the ending of suffering (MA 1:129; AA 1:70; SnA 2:454; ItA 1:8 f). Note that the text switches around the last two functions, so that the last is that of realization, which fits with the sequence of the Sutta. See Intro (2.4).

<sup>55</sup> Here calm and insight refers to the whole noble path itself. On calm and insight in meditation, see **Samatha & vipassanā**, SD 41.1.

<sup>56</sup> Comy identifies “(spiritual) knowledge” (*vijjā*) with the knowledge of the path of arhathood and “liberation” (*vimutti*) with the path of arhathood. Elsewhere we here usually see nirvana, the complete ending of suffering.



that, too,	is known and seen as it really is.
12.3 One is <i>not</i> aroused by	the ear.
One is <i>not</i> aroused by	sound.
One is <i>not</i> aroused by	ear-consciousness.
One is <i>not</i> aroused by	ear-contact.
One is <i>not</i> aroused, too, by	whatever that arises dependent on this ear-contact that is felt as <i>pleasant</i> or as <i>painful</i> or as <i>neutral</i>

### THE REFRAIN<sup>57</sup>

#### Craving is abandoned

12.4 *When one does not dwell yoked, not deluded, by that arousing, not seeking gratification, the 5 aggregates of clinging do not continue to pile up upon one.*

12.5 *And one's **craving**—that which brings rebirth, accompanied by delight and lust, running after pleasure here and there—is abandoned by one.*

#### Happy body and mind

12.6 <i>One's bodily troubles, too, is abandoned;</i>	<i>one's mental troubles, too, is abandoned.</i>
<i>One's bodily burning, too, is abandoned;</i>	<i>one's mental burning, too, is abandoned.</i>
<i>One's bodily fevers, too, are abandoned;</i>	<i>one's mental fevers, too, are abandoned.</i>
<i>One experiences both bodily happiness</i>	<i>and mental happiness.</i>

#### Accomplishment in concentration and wisdom

13 <i>For one whose <u>view</u> is in accordance with true reality, there is</i>	<i>right view.</i>
<i>For one whose <u>thought</u> is in accordance with true reality, there is</i>	<i>right thought.</i>
<i>For one whose <u>effort</u> is in accordance with true reality, there is</i>	<i>right effort.</i>
<i>For one whose <u>mindfulness</u> is in accordance with true reality, there is</i>	<i>right mindfulness.</i>
<i>one whose <u>samadhi</u> is in accordance with true reality, there is</i>	<i>right samadhi.</i>

#### Accomplishment in moral virtue

13.2 *However, his bodily action, verbal action and livelihood have been utterly purified earlier on.*

13.3 *Thus, for him, this noble eightfold path has been brought to fulfillment by cultivation.*

#### The 7 sets

13.4 <i>Through having cultivated this</i>	<i>noble eightfold path thus,</i>
<i>he brings to fulfillment by cultivating</i>	<i>the 4 focuses of mindfulness, too;</i>
<i>he brings to fulfillment by cultivating</i>	<i>the 4 right strivings, too;</i>
<i>he brings to fulfillment by cultivating</i>	<i>the 4 paths to spiritual power, too;</i>
<i>he brings to fulfillment by cultivating</i>	<i>the 5 spiritual faculties, too;</i>
<i>he brings to fulfillment by cultivating</i>	<i>the 5 spiritual powers, too;</i>
<i>he brings to fulfillment by cultivating</i>	<i>the 7 awakening-factors, too;</i>

#### Balance of samatha and vipassana

13.5 *These two states—samatha and vipassana [calm and insight]—occur as yoked together to him.*

## THE 4 NOBLE TRUTHS

<sup>57</sup> From here on, the preceding main passage (the preceding) repeats, changing only the sense-faculty, sense-object, and related dharmas, while this refrain [§§9.6-11.4] follows each time.

### The 4 functions of the noble truths

14 Those things to be comprehended by direct knowledge, one comprehends by direct knowledge.  
 Those things to be abandoned by direct knowledge, one abandons by direct knowledge.  
 Those things to be cultivated by direct knowledge, one cultivates by direct knowledge.  
 Those things to be realized by direct knowledge, one realizes by direct knowledge.

14.2 And what things, bhikshus, should be **comprehended** by direct knowledge?

The answer to this should be: **the 5 aggregates of clinging**, that is to say:

- (1) the aggregate of clinging that is form,
- (2) the aggregate of clinging that is feeling,
- (3) the aggregate of clinging that is perception,
- (4) the aggregate of clinging that are formations,
- (5) the aggregate of clinging that is consciousness.

These are the things that should be comprehended by direct knowledge.

14.3 And what things, bhikshus, should be abandoned by direct knowledge?

Ignorance and craving for existence.

These are the things that should be abandoned by direct knowledge.

14.4 And what things, bhikshus, should be **cultivated** by direct knowledge?

Samatha and vipassana [calm and insight].

These are the things that should be cultivated by direct knowledge.

14.5 And what things, bhikshus, should be **realized** by direct knowledge?

Knowledge and liberation. [Spiritual knowledge (vijjā) and spiritual liberation (vimutti).]

These are the things that should be realized by direct knowledge.

### THE NOSE

#### (3) When the nose is properly understood

15 But, bhikshus,  
 when **the nose** is known and seen as it really is,  
 when smell is known and seen as it really is,  
 when nose-consciousness is known and seen as it really is,  
 when nose-contact is known and seen as it really is—

15.2 whatever that arises dependent on this nose-contact that is felt as *pleasant* or as *painful* or as *neutral*—

that, too, is known and seen as it really is.

15.3 One is *not* aroused by the nose.

One is *not* aroused by smell.

One is *not* aroused by nose-consciousness.

One is *not* aroused by nose-contact.

One is *not* aroused, too, by whatever that arises dependent on this nose-contact that is felt as *pleasant* or as *painful* or as *neutral*

### THE REFRAIN

#### Craving is abandoned

15.4 When one does not dwell yoked, not deluded, by that arousing, not seeking gratification, **the 5 aggregates of clinging** do not continue to pile up upon one.

15.5 And one's **craving**—that which brings rebirth, accompanied by delight and lust, running after pleasure here and there—is abandoned by one.

#### Happy body and mind

15.6 *One's bodily troubles, too, is abandoned; one's mental troubles, too, is abandoned.  
 One's bodily burning, too, is abandoned; one's mental burning, too, is abandoned.  
 One's bodily fevers, too, are abandoned; one's mental fevers, too, are abandoned.  
 One experiences both bodily happiness and mental happiness.*

### Accomplishment in concentration and wisdom

16 For one whose view is in accordance with true reality, there is right view.  
 For one whose thought is in accordance with true reality, there is right thought.  
 For one whose effort is in accordance with true reality, there is right effort.  
 For one whose mindfulness is in accordance with true reality, there is right mindfulness.  
 For one whose samadhi is in accordance with true reality, there is right samadhi.

### Accomplishment in moral virtue

16.2 However, his bodily action, verbal action and livelihood have been utterly purified earlier on.  
 16.3 Thus, for him, this noble eightfold path has been brought to fulfillment by cultivation.

### The 7 sets

16.4 Through having cultivated this noble eightfold path thus,  
 he brings to fulfillment by cultivating the 4 focuses of mindfulness, too;  
 he brings to fulfillment by cultivating the 4 right strivings, too;  
 he brings to fulfillment by cultivating the 4 paths to spiritual power, too;  
 he brings to fulfillment by cultivating the 5 spiritual faculties, too;  
 he brings to fulfillment by cultivating the 5 spiritual powers, too;  
 he brings to fulfillment by cultivating the 7 awakening-factors, too;

### Balance of samatha and vipassana

16.5 These two states—samatha and vipassana [calm and insight]—occur as yoked together to him.

## THE 4 NOBLE TRUTHS

### The 4 functions of the noble truths

17 Those things to be comprehended by direct knowledge, one comprehends by direct knowledge.  
 Those things to be abandoned by direct knowledge, one abandons by direct knowledge.  
 Those things to be cultivated by direct knowledge, one cultivates by direct knowledge.  
 Those things to be realized by direct knowledge, one realizes by direct knowledge.

17.2 And what things, bhikshus, should be **comprehended** by direct knowledge?

The answer to this should be: **the 5 aggregates of clinging**, that is to say:

- (1) the aggregate of clinging that is form,
- (2) the aggregate of clinging that is feeling,
- (3) the aggregate of clinging that is perception,
- (4) the aggregate of clinging that are formations,
- (5) the aggregate of clinging that is consciousness.

These are the things that should be comprehended by direct knowledge.

17.3 And what things, bhikshus, should be **abandoned** by direct knowledge?

Ignorance and craving for existence.

These are the things that should be abandoned by direct knowledge.

17.4 And what things, bhikshus, should be **cultivated** by direct knowledge?

Samatha and vipassana [calm and insight].

These are the things that should be cultivated by direct knowledge.

17.5 And what things, bhikshus, should be **realized** by direct knowledge?

Knowledge and liberation. [Spiritual knowledge (vijjā) and spiritual liberation (vimutti).]

*These are the things that should be realized by direct knowledge.*

### THE TONGUE

#### (4) When the tongue is properly understood

18 But, bhikshus,

when **the tongue** is known and seen as it really is,

when taste is known and seen as it really is,

when tongue-consciousness is known and seen as it really is,

when tongue-contact is known and seen as it really is—

18.2 whatever that arises dependent on this tongue-contact that is felt as *pleasant* or as *painful* or as *neutral*—

that, too, is known and seen as it really is.

18.3 One is *not* aroused by the tongue.

One is *not* aroused by taste.

One is *not* aroused by tongue -consciousness.

One is *not* aroused by tongue-contact.

One is *not* aroused, too, by whatever that arises dependent on this tongue-contact that is felt as *pleasant* or as *painful* or as *neutral*.

### THE REFRAIN

#### Craving is abandoned

18.4 *When one does not dwell yoked, not deluded, by that arousing, not seeking gratification, the 5 aggregates of clinging do not continue to pile up upon one.*

18.5 *And one's **craving**—that which brings rebirth, accompanied by delight and lust, running after pleasure here and there—is abandoned by one.*

#### Happy body and mind

18.6 *One's bodily troubles, too, is abandoned; one's mental troubles, too, is abandoned.*

*One's bodily burning, too, is abandoned; one's mental burning, too, is abandoned.*

*One's bodily fevers, too, are abandoned; one's mental fevers, too, are abandoned.*

*One experiences both bodily happiness and mental happiness.*

#### Accomplishment in concentration and wisdom

19 *For one whose view is in accordance with true reality, there is right view.*

*For one whose thought is in accordance with true reality, there is right thought.*

*For one whose effort is in accordance with true reality, there is right effort.*

*For one whose mindfulness is in accordance with true reality, there is right mindfulness.*

*For one whose samadhi is in accordance with true reality, there is right samadhi.*

#### Accomplishment in moral virtue

19.2 *However, his bodily action, verbal action and livelihood have been utterly purified earlier on.*

19.3 *Thus, for him, this noble eightfold path has been brought to fulfillment by cultivation.*

#### The 7 sets

19.4 *Through having cultivated this noble eightfold path thus, he brings to fulfillment by cultivating the 4 focuses of mindfulness, too; he brings to fulfillment by cultivating the 4 right strivings, too; he brings to fulfillment by cultivating the 4 paths to spiritual power, too;*

he brings to fulfillment by cultivating      the 5 spiritual faculties, too;  
 he brings to fulfillment by cultivating      the 5 spiritual powers, too;  
 he brings to fulfillment by cultivating      the 7 awakening-factors, too;

### Balance of samatha and vipassana

19.5 *These two states—samatha and vipassana [calm and insight]—occur as yoked together to him.*

## THE 4 NOBLE TRUTHS

### The 4 functions of the noble truths

**20** *Those things to be comprehended by direct knowledge, one comprehends by direct knowledge.*  
*Those things to be abandoned by direct knowledge, one abandons by direct knowledge.*  
*Those things to be cultivated by direct knowledge, one cultivates by direct knowledge.*  
*Those things to be realized by direct knowledge, one realizes by direct knowledge.*

20.2 *And what things, bhikshus, should be comprehended by direct knowledge?*

*The answer to this should be: the 5 aggregates of clinging, that is to say:*

- (1) *the aggregate of clinging that is form,*
- (2) *the aggregate of clinging that is feeling,*
- (3) *the aggregate of clinging that is perception,*
- (4) *the aggregate of clinging that are formations,*
- (5) *the aggregate of clinging that is consciousness.*

*These are the things that should be comprehended by direct knowledge.*

20.3 *And what things, bhikshus, should be abandoned by direct knowledge?*

*Ignorance and craving for existence.*

*These are the things that should be abandoned by direct knowledge.*

20.4 *And what things, bhikshus, should be cultivated by direct knowledge?*

*Samatha and vipassana [calm and insight].*

*These are the things that should be cultivated by direct knowledge.*

20.5 *And what things, bhikshus, should be realized by direct knowledge?*

*Knowledge and liberation. [Spiritual knowledge (vijjā) and spiritual liberation (vimutti).]*

*These are the things that should be realized by direct knowledge.*

## THE BODY

### (5) When the body is properly understood

**21** *But, bhikshus,*  
 when **the body**                                      is known and seen as it really is,  
 when touch                                              is known and seen as it really is,  
 when body-consciousness                              is known and seen as it really is,  
 when body-contact                                      is known and seen as it really is—

21.2 *whatever that arises dependent on this body-contact that is felt as pleasant or as painful or as neutral—*

*that, too,                                                      is known and seen as it really is.*

21.3 *One is not aroused by                              the body.*

*One is not aroused by                                      touch.*

*One is not aroused by                                      body-consciousness.*

*One is not aroused by                                      body-contact.*

*One is not aroused, too, by                              whatever that arises dependent on this body-contact  
 that is felt as pleasant or as painful or as neutral.*

## THE REFRAIN



Craving is abandoned

21.4 *When one does not dwell yoked, not deluded, by that arousing, not seeking gratification, the 5 aggregates of clinging do not continue to pile up upon one.*

21.5 *And one's **craving**—that which brings rebirth, accompanied by delight and lust, running after pleasure here and there—is abandoned by one.*

Happy body and mind

21.6 *One's bodily troubles, too, is abandoned; one's mental troubles, too, is abandoned.  
One's bodily burning, too, is abandoned; one's mental burning, too, is abandoned.  
One's bodily fevers, too, are abandoned; one's mental fevers, too, are abandoned.  
One experiences both bodily happiness and mental happiness.*

Accomplishment in concentration and wisdom

22 *For one whose view is in accordance with true reality, there is right view.  
For one whose thought is in accordance with true reality, there is right thought.  
For one whose effort is in accordance with true reality, there is right effort.  
For one whose mindfulness is in accordance with true reality, there is right mindfulness.  
For one whose samadhi is in accordance with true reality, there is right samadhi.*

Accomplishment in moral virtue

22.2 *However, his bodily action, verbal action and livelihood have been utterly purified earlier on.*  
22.3 *Thus, for him, this noble eightfold path has been brought to fulfillment by cultivation.*

The 7 sets

22.4 *Through having cultivated this noble eightfold path thus,  
he brings to fulfillment by cultivating the 4 focuses of mindfulness, too;  
he brings to fulfillment by cultivating the 4 right strivings, too;  
he brings to fulfillment by cultivating the 4 paths to spiritual power, too;  
he brings to fulfillment by cultivating the 5 spiritual faculties, too;  
he brings to fulfillment by cultivating the 5 spiritual powers, too;  
he brings to fulfillment by cultivating the 7 awakening-factors, too;*

Balance of samatha and vipassana

22.5 *These two states—samatha and vipassana [calm and insight]—occur as yoked together to him.*

## THE 4 NOBLE TRUTHS

The 4 functions of the noble truths

23 *Those things to be comprehended by direct knowledge, one comprehends by direct knowledge.  
Those things to be abandoned by direct knowledge, one abandons by direct knowledge.  
Those things to be cultivated by direct knowledge, one cultivates by direct knowledge.  
Those things to be realized by direct knowledge, one realizes by direct knowledge.*

23.2 *And what things, bhikshus, should be **comprehended** by direct knowledge?  
The answer to this should be: the 5 aggregates of clinging, that is to say:*

- (1) *the aggregate of clinging that is form,*
- (2) *the aggregate of clinging that is feeling,*
- (3) *the aggregate of clinging that is perception,*
- (4) *the aggregate of clinging that are formations,*
- (5) *the aggregate of clinging that is consciousness.*

*These are the things that should be comprehended by direct knowledge.*

23.3 *And what things, bhikshus, should be **abandoned** by direct knowledge?*

*Ignorance and craving for existence.*

*These are the things that should be abandoned by direct knowledge.*

23.4 *And what things, bhikshus, should be **cultivated** by direct knowledge?*

*Samatha and vipassana [calm and insight].*

*These are the things that should be cultivated by direct knowledge.*

23.5 *And what things, bhikshus, should be **realized** by direct knowledge?*

*Knowledge and liberation. [Spiritual knowledge (vijjā) and spiritual liberation (vimutti).]*

*These are the things that should be realized by direct knowledge.*

## THE MIND

### (6) When the mind is properly understood

24 But, bhikshus,

when **the mind**

is known and seen as it really is,

when mind-object [thought]

is known and seen as it really is,

when mind-consciousness

is known and seen as it really is,

when mind-contact

is known and seen as it really is—

24.2 whatever that arises dependent on this mind-contact that is felt as *pleasant* or as *painful* or as *neutral*—

that, too,

is known and seen as it really is.

24.3 One is *not* aroused by

the mind.

One is *not* aroused by

mind-object [thought].

One is *not* aroused by

mind-consciousness.

One is *not* aroused by

mind-contact.

One is *not* aroused, too, by

whatever that arises dependent on this mind-contact that is felt as *pleasant* or as *painful* or as *neutral*.

## THE REFRAIN

### Craving is abandoned

24.5 *When one does not dwell yoked, not deluded, by that arousing, not seeking gratification, the 5 aggregates of clinging do not continue to pile up upon one.*

24.5 *And one's **craving**—that which brings rebirth, accompanied by delight and lust, running after pleasure here and there—is abandoned by one.*

### Happy body and mind

24.6 *One's bodily troubles, too, is abandoned; one's mental troubles, too, is abandoned.*

*One's bodily burning, too, is abandoned; one's mental burning, too, is abandoned.*

*One's bodily fevers, too, are abandoned; one's mental fevers, too, are abandoned.*

*One experiences both bodily happiness and mental happiness.*

### Accomplishment in concentration and wisdom

25 *For one whose view is in accordance with true reality, there is*

*right view.*

*For one whose thought is in accordance with true reality, there is*

*right thought.*

*For one whose effort is in accordance with true reality, there is*

*right effort.*

*For one whose mindfulness is in accordance with true reality, there is*

*right mindfulness.*

*For one whose samadhi is in accordance with true reality, there is*

*right samadhi.*

### Accomplishment in moral virtue

25.2 However, his bodily action, verbal action and livelihood have been utterly purified earlier on.

25.3 Thus, for him, this noble eightfold path has been brought to fulfillment by cultivation.

### The 7 sets

25.4 Through having cultivated this noble eightfold path thus, he brings to fulfillment by cultivating the 4 focuses of mindfulness, too; he brings to fulfillment by cultivating the 4 right strivings, too; he brings to fulfillment by cultivating the 4 paths to spiritual power, too; he brings to fulfillment by cultivating the 5 spiritual faculties, too; he brings to fulfillment by cultivating the 5 spiritual powers, too; he brings to fulfillment by cultivating the 7 awakening-factors, too;

### Balance of samatha and vipassana

24.5 These two states—samatha and vipassana [calm and insight]—occur as yoked together to him.

## THE 4 NOBLE TRUTHS

### The 4 functions of the noble truths

**26** Those things to be comprehended by direct knowledge, one comprehends by direct knowledge.  
 Those things to be abandoned by direct knowledge, one abandons by direct knowledge.  
 Those things to be cultivated by direct knowledge, one cultivates by direct knowledge.  
 Those things to be realized by direct knowledge, one realizes by direct knowledge.

26.2 And what things, bhikshus, should be **comprehended** by direct knowledge?

The answer to this should be: **the 5 aggregates of clinging**, that is to say:

- (1) the aggregate of clinging that is form,
- (2) the aggregate of clinging that is feeling,
- (3) the aggregate of clinging that is perception,
- (4) the aggregate of clinging that are formations,
- (5) the aggregate of clinging that is consciousness.

These are the things that should be comprehended by direct knowledge.

26.3 And what things, bhikshus, should be **abandoned** by direct knowledge?

Ignorance and craving for existence.

These are the things that should be abandoned by direct knowledge.

26.4 And what things, bhishus, should be **cultivated** by direct knowledge?

Samatha and vipassana [calm and insight].

These are the things that should be cultivated by direct knowledge.

26.5 And what things, bhikshus, should be **realized** by direct knowledge?

Knowledge and liberation. [Spiritual knowledge (vijjā) and spiritual liberation (vimutti).]

These are the things that should be realized by direct knowledge.

**27** The Blessed One said this. The monks joyfully approved of the Blessed One's word.

— evaṃ —

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